# YOUNG DAYS.

THE LIGHT THAT IS FELT (see page 39).

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## LILY'S REWARD.

A NEW ZEALAND STORY.

'WHAT shall I do?" said Lily, turning the shillings over and over in her hand. "Our two last ducks! Yet here is the money for them. There are still the hens. We cannot sell the goat, for Baby needs the milk. With Father dead, and Mother turned too ill to work, what shall we do when all the hens are sold? And Tom's boots are so thin! Teddy; come out of that! Whatever are you about, messing your clothes with dabbling in the stream. You'll fall into a pool!"

The little boy looked up doubtfully, standing above his ancles in the water.

"I saw a big bullyhead swim under the bank."

"Leave it alone dear, you're making yourself quite muddy."

The stream he stood in was not like any that you know. It's banks were green with moist and tender ferns that grew in the loose black soil, or plunged their roots into mossy and rotting tree trunks. The living trees around were for the most part dusky leaved, and evergreen, and some were much larger than any that you have ever seen. And then the ferns themselves! They were everywhere! Some were small and so delicate that you could almost see through them, some grew hanging like long streamers from the trees. And there were others more wonderful still. They were not unlike great umbrellas in shape. They had tall rough stems—rough with broken stalks and matted creepers, and were crowned with a graceful tuft of drooping feathery leaves, lined with rows of spots in silver, or jet black. Those were tree ferns, and they grew on the borders of a stream that rose far in the hills and tumbled down through warm green shadow to the brilliant sunshine at the edge of the New Zealand bush.

Teddy's shoes lay at the root of one, with his socks beside them. Lily picked them up.

"I'll put them on for you," she said. "Come like a good boy, and go home with me." Teddy submitted ruefully to his fate and stumbled through the narrow strip of bush, to where the grass grew short and fine.

"What a lot of mushrooms there are to-day," said the boy, kicking one to pieces as he spoke.

"The rain yesterday has brought them up, and the warm sunshine this morning." Then with a sudden thought Lily added, "Ted, dear, will you and Lizzie gather some for me if I lend you a basket?"

"What do you wish such a lot for? Mother's not well enough to make ketsup."

"No; but I've seen her do it often, and I think I could. Besides we might sell some mushrooms in the town. I'll ask Tom to try when he comes home from school. Can't you walk a little faster?"

"Oh, yes! But what's the hurry?"

"I must get back to Mother. She is much worse, and she has tasted nothing since her dinner yesterday. When she had trussed the ducks, and given me them to carry to Judge Thompson's, I saw her stagger, and helped her to the couch. There was a little tea left in the teapot, but she would not take it. Stay! I've thought of something! Teddy, do make haste!"

Soon they reached the cottage, a low wooden building smothered in greenery. The Mother still lay on the Colonial couch, very weak and pale. She had been weeping too, and her eyes had dark circles round them. Her lips quivered when she tried to speak, and her hands were trembling. It was scarcely a month since her husband had been carried home dead and laid on that same couch. The strong man was killed in a moment by the fall of the great tree that he was felling.

"There are the baskets, Ted! Find Lizzie and run off. There's a good boy."

She went off to the wood stack for the fire was low.

"I wonder if Tom remembered to chop up some logs before he went to school," she thought. Here, as in a hundred other little things, the strong active arm was badly missed. She gathered some chips, and two or three split logs, and coaxed them into a blaze.

"I'll soon have Mother look a little better," she said to herself. "It's food she needs—something that is tempting. There is no meat in the house, and though we have that money now, the butcher is so far away. How glad I am that I watched her when she made the soup for that sick girl a while ago. It smelt so good and it was only made of giblets. I can make some for Mother now."

She took the giblets of the ducks into the scullery, and began to wash them. She laid the gizzards on a board and cut them open. They were full of pebbles, and bright yellow grains shone all among them.

"What can they be?"

She picked out one of the largest. It was nearly the size of a split pea. She turned it over in her hand, and took it to the window.

"It is so heavy!" she thought.

"The ducks must have picked it up among the gravel in the stream. There might be gold there. There are old workings in the hills above. Oh! if it were gold! It is too good to be true!"

She put the gravel with the bright grains safely aside, and began to make the soup for her mother, tasting and flavouring it carefully, and serving it neatly to tempt her. Her mother smiled and drank it slowly, but she finished the cupful! Then Lily washed the dish and pan, and put them by. She took the gravel and poured water over it, picking out the stones, till nothing but the heavy metal lay mixed with some sand in the bottom of the dish. Then she washed out the lighter sand and strained the yellow crumbs and dust through a thick cotton rag, and tied them up in it. After that she put on her hat, and went out through the paddock. For she said, "I'll take them to the Judge. He'll tell me if they are gold, and if they're not, Mother won't be disappointed as she knows nothing about them."

The Judge was sitting on his verandah smoking his after dinner pipe, among the passion flowers that festooned it, but he listened to the little girl, and examined her parcel. Then he rose and left her standing, while he went into the house. When he came back he had a small bottle in his hand with a glass stopper in it. He took a little rod of glass and dipped it in the bottle, and then touched the yellow grains with it.

"It is gold sure enough, Lily," he said. "Where did you get it?"

"In the ducks gizzards, Sir," said Lily.

"What? In the gizzards of the ducks we had for dinner! They were your mother's own ducks, were they not? Where do they mostly feed?"

"We feed them sometimes, but they dabble a lot about the stream at the foot of our paddock."

"You mean the stream that runs right through my land."

"Yes, Sir. It comes down from the hills at the far side of our place, and runs down to yours, just where the bush ends and the low tufty shrubs are growing."

"I must see your mother about this to-morrow. Meantime will you just come into the house a moment?"

The Judge set a pair of tiny scales upon the table, and carefully shook the gold on one of them, and weighed it with the small brass weights.

"Now, Lily, shall I take it down to the bank to-morrow, or would you like me to give you its value myself just now?"

"Thank you, Sir, if you don't mind I'd rather have it now."

He opened his pocket-book and took out some notes. Then he paused a moment and put them back again.

"You would rather not have paper money; it won't look so real to you child," he said. For you see he had children of his own and could understand. So he unlocked his desk and took out two bright golden sovereigns, and handed them to Lily, with some odd shillings from his purse, and told her he would come and see her mother the next day, for there must be more gold where the ducks found that.

Lily is quite grown up now, and Lizzie is at a boarding school, and Tom rides round his mother's land, which is a large block now, and counts the cattle, and has visions of a seat in the Colonial Parliament.

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## THE LIGHT THAT IS FELT.

A TENDER child of summers three,
Seeking her little bed at night,
Paused on the dark stair timidly;
"O mother, take my hand," said she,
"And then the dark will all be light."

We older children grope our way
From dark behind to dark before:
And only when our hands we lay,
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day,
And there is darkness nevermore.

Reach downward to the sunless days,
Wherein our guides are blind as we,
And faith is small and hope delays;
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,
And let us feel the light of Thee!

—*John G. Whittier.*

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"WHAT makes you love me?" asked a young mother of her little daughter. "I don't know, mamma," was the reply; "but I fink it is because I have known you so long."

## TOM'S PETS.

One day Tom came into the parlour, where we were all sitting at work, with his owl Otho under his arm, evidently much discomposed. On enquiring the cause for his displeasure, he replied that Miss Jane's cat had robbed his owl's pantry in a most unprincipled manner, of two mice, a bat and some bits of meat, which he had with some trouble procured, and now the poor thing had nothing left for his supper. Somehow this intelligence was given with such an air of offended dignity, yet with so much simplicity, that, instead of awakening our sympathetic feelings in behalf of the injured owl we could not help laughing. Our ill-timed mirth had the effect of increasing poor Tom's displeasure; and he who was, generally speaking, full of mirth and good-humour, now took it into his head to be seriously offended; and when Jane offered to amuse herself, and bring him into good-humour, by teasing Otho, he rose from his seat with a resolute air, saying he did not choose his owl to be so insulted; and added, as he left the room: "Miss Jane, I would advise you to take the last look of Otho, for that owl you shall never see again." Now, by some mysterious coincidence, Tom's words were verified; for neither he nor us ever saw the owl from that day: it disappeared in the course of the afternoon, and was never seen again.

Tom's attempts at rearing and keeping birds proved as unsuccessful as some former ones of mine with regard to a young robin. I must confess, taking young birds from under the parent wing, is a practice for which I am no advocate; it is so seldom these attempts are crowned with success; and so many helpless creatures are exposed annually to the miseries arising either from starvation and neglect, or over-feeding with improper aliment. I would rather dissuade my young friends entirely from any attempts of the kind. To those who possess kindly dispositions, I would plead in behalf of the tender nestlings, which are taken from beneath the fostering care of the parent-bird, from the warm and sheltered nest, to be placed in some rude basket or cage, where they are exposed to the inclemencies of the cold air upon their naked, unfledged limbs, and the painful sensations arising from hunger and thirst, or the want of that peculiar food which is absolutely essential to their preservation; and to seek which many birds migrate, previous to the period of incubation, to those countries that produce the particular insect or seed requisite for the nourishment of their offspring; guided in their flight across unmeasured distances of sea and shore, by that unerring Wisdom which governs the animal creation, from the emmet that crawls upon the earth, to the eagle that builds her house among the cloud-capped rocks. To man is given reason and power to exercise his judgment, and he is accountable to his Maker for all his actions. A superior intelligence governs the animal world: they obey an unerring law, from which they never swerve. This law they call instinct. It was established by their all-wise Creator, and like the rest of his works, fills us with admiration, and obliges us to acknowledge his wisdom is excellent, and his ways past finding out. This instinct, that leads so many of our birds to migrate in winter to warmer climates, or brings the natives of warmer climates to pass the breeding-season with us, is incomprehensible to our reason; we can only refer the wisdom of the bird back to the providential Power that made the creature subject to a law whose impulse they obey with one accord.

Whither, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As darkly painted on the evening sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or maze of river wide;
Or where the recking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean's side?

There is a Power, whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,
The desert and illimitable air,
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere;
Yet stoop, not weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows: reeds shallbend
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone: the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides thro' the boundless air thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will guide my steps aright.

When my two eldest sisters were little girls, one six, the other eight years old, they had a tame sparrow, which had been injured in a trap: the gardener was just on the point of wringing its neck, when, touched with pity for the poor little bird, they begged Simms (that was the gardener's name) would give it to them. This he accordingly did, first binding up the injured leg with a piece of split reed, drawn from the thatch of one of the outhouses; the hollow part of the reed being placed so as to admit the bird's leg, and then bound carefully together with a bit of soft thread; thus giving the broken limb an artificial support. The plan succeeded so well, that in the course of a week or ten days the bandage was able to be removed, and the sparrow could hop about almost as well as before it received the injury.

This plan I have seen practised under my own eye repeatedly, both with birds and small animals. The first time I ever saw this operation performed, was by an elderly lady, a friend of my mother's, who happened to overhear my sister Jane lamenting over the deplorable situation of a favourite old cat, that had been found in the garden with her fore leg dreadfully fractured. Bidding Jane not to cry, the lady sent her into the garden to cut an elder-stick from a great bush that grew in the shrubbery; and having split the stick, and removed the pith with the point of the knife, she next wound a piece of soft rag round the wounded limb; she placed it between the two hollow halves of the elder-stick, and bound them both together, but not so tightly as to prevent the circulation of the blood. Fanny was then suffered to retire to a soft bed of hay, made up for her in a warm nook of the back-kitchen, and supplied with milk and other food occasionally; in a short time she was perfectly restored. This poor old puss, who was the best mouser that ever was seen, had her leg broken no less than four different times during the course of her life; and we pursued the same plan in setting it. We had a chicken, which underwent the same process, and with the like success.

During the time of its confinement my sisters attended their sparrow's little wants with unremitting kindness; and this pretty creature became so sensible of the attentions it received at their hands, that it evinced the most lively regard for them, hopping towards them gratefully, and picking the crumbs from their hands. I regret to say, this affectionate little creature was killed by a cat, that chanced to enter the nursery while the nurse-maid and the children were gone out for a walk in the neighbouring meadows.

My sisters lamented greatly for the cruel death of their pretty favourite; and the footman, who was a remarkably good-natured man, seeing his young ladies so grieved for the loss of their pet bird, set a brick-trap in the court-yard, and soon succeeded in capturing a fine fat cock-sparrow, which he offered for their acceptance, to supply the place of the dead bird, which, I must tell you, was a hen-sparrow, of no particular beauty, either of plumage or form; but though the new bird was much handsomer, it was very bold and fierce, not at all resembling the meek, gentle creature they had lost; and instead of appearing at all grateful for the attentions he received, this saucy sparrow resisted in a violent manner all attempts towards reconciliation.

Finding their overtures towards friendship vehemently resisted, and fearing he would beat himself to death against the nursery window, they agreed to restore the little rebel to his former liberty; but previous to letting him go, Agnes placed about his neck a large gilt earring, that one of the servants had given her that very morning, having broken its fellow, and not thinking it worth replacing. This ring Agnes fastened round the neck of the sparrow, and opening the window, sent him back to his mates, that busy little crew that were all dressing and pluming their brown feathers, perched on the naked sprays of the elm trees on the lawn below; to whom I dare say he told a very sorrowful tale of the terrors he had endured, from the time he became imprisoned in the brick trap, till the collar was fixed about his neck and his liberty granted.

Nearly two years after this adventure, papa was firing his gun at a flock of small birds that had nearly destroyed all his new-sown radish seeds, and was perfectly astonished, on finding among the killed and wounded, a sparrow having a gilt ring round his neck. On mentioning the circumstance in the parlour, the sparrow and ring were both identified by my sisters to be the very same they had formerly set free from the nursery window.

*(To be continued).*

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When a liar speaks the truth he finds his punishment in the general disbelief.

# LITTLE ASKER'S PAGE.

April Fool Day! Yes, I remember, when I was a boy at school, being made a big fool of on this day, although I was only a very little fellow then. Perhaps I was a quiet, lonely, simple-looking lad, and needed sharpening up. I don't know; but we will suppose so. And it is wonderful how being fooled once or twice *does* sharpen a fellow up. Tom Tulliver, in George Elliot's story, "The Mill on the Floss," says to Bob Jakin, the travelling packman, who has been telling how he cheats the "skin-flint women" when they try to get his goods for less money than they are worth: "Now, don't you be up to any of your tricks, Bob, else you'll get transported some day." Bob Jakin answers: "No, no; not me, Mr. Tom. There's no law again' flea-bites. If I wasn't to take a fool in now and then, they'd never get any wiser."

Bob Jakin had never been heard of when I was a boy, but that biggest fellow in our school who made a fool of me *may* have meant to do me good by it. We were in the play-ground at morning play-time. He called me to him and asked me, would I run an errand for him? Of course I would! He was about eighteen years of age and came a long way to school, so that he had to bring lunch or dinner with him. This he usually took at Mrs. Johnson's, an old woman in a thatched cottage in the village. The cottage was about an eighth of a mile from our schools. What Linnaker wished was that I would just run there and ask Mrs. Johnson if *that parcel had come for him.* I went. No; Mrs. Johnson, with her little bent old body, and grandmotherly face gazing out from a clean white cap, with a puzzled look said: "No parcel's come here this day." And neither she nor I suspected any trick. Then I bethought me that play-time would be up, and I should be late in school. I ran back, hard as I could; got to the play-ground and found it silent and empty; hurried into the school breathless, and found all the boys at work, and myself called up to the master's desk. But he was a sensible master. He listened to my explanation; and then he called Linnaker to the desk. All eyes in the school turned towards the master. Was he going to flog Linnaker, the biggest, and indeed one of the best and kindest fellows in the school? All was hushed; every word of Linnaker's and of the master's could be heard.

"You see, sir," said Linnaker, "it's April the first."

"Ah, yes," exclaimed the master with a smile. Then turning to me, calling me by name, and putting his hand gently on my head, he said in the kindliest way:

"You hear my lad, you have been made a dear little April of. But never mind. "Every man hath a fool in his sleeve," says the old proverb. "A fellow student once fooled me worse than this. Being fooled while a boy is better than being fooled when a man, because, when you've been badly fooled once in your life, you deserve all you get ever after if you let anyone fool you as badly again."

The boys in their desks all quietly laughed at me as I walked to my seat; and he would have been a smart chum that could have borrowed six marbles from me just then! It is so vexing to be made a fool of.

But I never forgot the lesson. Many Aprils have gone since then, and————Well, I won't say the rest. I will only say that Linnaker behaved like a great brother to me; he actually asked *me* to forgive *him;* and he gave me a splendid plaiting of horse-hair, which he had plaited himself (he was a farmer's son), the different plaits of hair having been dyed blue and red, which, worked among the white and black, made a beautiful plait. Linnaker was my hero, my authority, my defender, at that school ever after.

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But perhaps my Little Askers know that the month of April is something more and better than the time of tricks. If I were to print as a question in *Young Days:* "What date is New Year's Day?"—all your answers would be, January the 1st. Yes, and that answer would be right *now.* But it would have been *wrong* once. New Year's Day used to be the 25th of March. The Year was said to *begin* then. And I sometimes think that it would feel more like *New* Year if we might begin it about this time. Between December and January there seems no difference at all; but between December and April, what a change! At present our Year begins with winter; if reckoned in the old way it would begin in Spring. And, in fact, we always *do say* the Season's in the old order:—we say, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter.

You have heard the phrase: "Mad as a March hare." This is said to mean that hares in March are very wild. Well, there is something to be wild about. Winter is nearly over. Cold as March winds blow, the earth is steadily turning *our* side of itself more and more toward yon huge Fire, the Sun, and there soon begins to be a change in the ground, and the million myriad things that grow in, and grow out of the ground. Seed-sap feels the sun-beams and makes a stir; tree-sap feels the same and starts flowing faster; buds open; the glue, that held them sealed up, melts; timidly, slowly some leaves unfold; even flowers, yellow and white (why yellow and white especially?) bloom. No, wonder, then, that *this* month is called THE OPENING MONTH; for that is exactly what is meant by the word April—*Opening*, from the Latin *Aperire*—to open. "Moon of Bright Nights" the Red Indians of North America call this month of April, as those of you will know who have read Longfellow's charming poem-tale *Hiawatha*. "The Grass Month" is what the Dutch call it. Our forefathers used to call it Oster or Easter-month. But I think I like our word April—Opening—as well as any.

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None of my Little Askers will yet have read Robert Browning's Poem "Pippa Passes." Pippa works at the silk mills in Italy, all day and every day in the year, except *one*. She just has one day in the year, one holiday, all to herself. And you may be sure that that one day is very precious to her.

As soon as ever the Sun rises that morning Pippa springs out of bed delighted. She laughs, she sings, she talks to the sunbeams that dance in the clear water of her wash-bowl and play in bright gold flashes on the ceiling. And, by and by, Pippa is ready to spend her Day in the air and the sunshine. And oh what a happy, innocent, pure little Pippa she was all that Day. No one in all Asola could be merrier; and no one perhaps did half as much good, without knowing it. Wherever Pippa *passed*, bad people felt their own badness, beside her goodness, and good people intending to do wrong were kept from it by Pippa passing by. Pippa was nearly always singing, and this is the first song she sang as she walked along in the open air that morning:

"The year's at the Spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!"

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Suppose you are at a Theatre waiting for the Play to begin. Slowly you see that iron fire-proof screen first removed. Next you watch the curtain rise. Then you look at the scenery on the stage. And now you notice one by one, or maybe in groups, the actors and actresses, differently dressed, singing or speaking. You may have your favourite actors and actresses and are pleased when you see them once again. You observe what they do. You hearken to what they say. And minute by minute, scene after scene, the play proceeds from its opening to its end.

Well, April is the opening of a new Play. Nature is the stage. The iron fire-proof screen of frost has been slowly removed. The soft white curtain of snow is wound up. New scenery is on the stage; old favourite actors and actresses are appearing; new dresses they have all got; and there are some fresh faces among them too.

Hush! Hark! Let us watch this new Play. Let us listen to these actors old and new. Look at the scenery, too, for it will be changed and gone directly.

What shall we see on Nature's stage out-of-doors in fields, lanes, parks and such places during this month? Birds coming back; insects coming out; leaves unfolding; ferns unrolling; flowers a-bloom.

Why we might just as well have a bit of fun about it; and I'll tell you what will be rare April fun! What do you think? We who read *Young Days* live all over Great Britain and Ireland. Now suppose we all join at a Game which I will call "The Game of Quick Eyes and Slow Eyes." The boy or girl shall win the game who answers best as below.

LITTLE ASKER'S CORNER.

(1) WILD FLOWERS: Which flower this month did you see first? On what day? How many other flowers have you seen? (Ferns and Mosses count).

(2) TREES: Which tree did you first see with new leaves on? On what day? How many other trees with new leaves on have you seen?

(3) BIRDS: Which bird this month did you notice first? On what day? How many other birds have you noticed?

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## JOEY AND LOUIE, OR THE FAIRY'S GIFT.

BY E. A. GIBBS.

### CHAPTER VII.

JOEY'S INTRODUCTION TO THE FAIRY QUEEN.

T was a new sensation to Joey, to find himself "a giant amongst pigmies." Accustomed to the lowly position, usually assigned to a small boy among elders, who consider it their duty to repress and snub all youthful attempts at self-assertion, it was scarcely surprising if his head was slightly turned, by the universal admiration and homage now offered by the fairies, in deference to his superior size and strength, and he felt himself "a great man indeed" as he strode along, with his nose well in the air, bowing to right and left, and fully enjoying the appreciation, which he felt had been too long denied, to his superior merits.

The scene that met the boy's eyes was a strange one, had he been sufficiently at liberty to give it the observation it deserved, but he was too excited and too much taken up with a sense of his own importance, to be able to appreciate details, or to receive more than a confused impression, of a gaily-dressed and brilliant throng, of tiny creatures of various shapes and forms, flitting hither and thither amid the palm trees, and orange groves, some coming to swell the ranks of the spectators at the road-side, others hastening forward towards some given point, apparently the centre of attraction, whilst the very air seemed alive with the sound of tinkling bells, song of birds, hum of bees, and peals of rippling laughter, so infectious, that Joey felt as if he must laugh too, for very joy and light-heartedness.

At a turn of the road, however, as he caught sight of the gorgeous Palace of Crystal, that rose up before him, its towers glittering like diamonds, in the rays of the noon-tide sun, and became aware of the vast concourse, gathered to receive him, his confidence received a slight shock, and he began to wish, he had someone of his own size and race, to support him in the coming ordeal.

So far the little people had been very friendly, and shown themselves well inclined towards him, but should he happen to offend their prejudices, or should any unforeseen unpleasantness occur, there was no doubt, that he would stand but a poor chance, one among so many!

And this uneasiness increased, as having reached the Palace, and passed through an exquisite gateway of pearl, inlaid with rubies and emeralds, he found himself in a spacious courtyard, guarded by a formidable band of tiny warriors, clad from head to foot in shining mail.

At the approach of the procession, the warriors clashed their spears together and saluted, then at a signal from the herald, formed themselves into a body-guard, and marched, four abreast, across the court-yard and out through another gateway, leading into the Palace itself.

Passing through a lofty and gorgeously decorated hall, they reached the Presence Chamber, at the far end of which, was a raised daïs, where, seated on a magnificent throne of carved ivory, inlaid with precious stones, the dainty little Queen of the Fairies, surrounded by a bevy of statesmen, warriors, courtiers, and elegantly-dressed ladies, waited to receive her guest. Arrived within about ten yards of the daïs the cortege made a halt, and the herald having blown a blast on his silver trumpet, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew, leaving Joey, to the charge of two gorgeously-apparalled chamberlains, who conducted him to the foot of the throne, and there left him alone.

Confused and bewildered at the brilliancy of his surroundings, the boy doffed his plumed cap, and fell on one knee, in the approved style of a hero of romance, then with bent head and a beating heart, awaited the commands of the beautiful little creature, who was regarding him curiously, and in whom he recognised the fair charmer of the "Fairy Glen."

"You are bold, young sir, first to take our subjects captive, and then to intrude uninvited in our dominions! Pray enlighten us, as to the reasons to which we are indebted, for the honour of your visit!" she said, at last breaking the silence, in a voice clear and sweet as the tinkling of a silver bell, but with a slight touch of scorn in its tone, which to Joey's excited imagination, seemed to bode ill to his mission.

For a full moment, which seemed to him like hours, he remained speechless, racking his brain in vain, in the endeavour to recall all he had read or heard, of the etiquette to be observed in Fairyland, but alas! his usual wit

and readiness had forsaken him, in his hour of need!

Suddenly the awful pause was broken by the sound of a faint titter, which ran through all the circle of courtiers, like the ripple on the surface of a lake, and stirring Joey's anger had for effect, to restore him to his senses.

Summoning his courage to his aid, he rose and advancing a step, inclined his head modestly as he replied, in low firm tones,

"Your Majesty must pardon her servant if overpowered by a vision of loveliness, surpassing even his most sanguine expectations, he has remained, as one dumb in her presence!" Then venturing to raise his eyes, and perceiving by the blush and smile which flitted across the Queen's face, that his words had found favour in her eyes, he continued more boldly, "Your Grace has demanded the reasons, which led to my intrusion, but surely the attraction of so much grace and loveliness is in itself, my plea and my apology, for as the moth is drawn to the candle, so are all eyes drawn to the centre of light and beauty, which radiates from the presence of the Queen."

"Prettily spoken, young sir! You are apparently well-versed, in the language of courts, and there is just sufficient truth in your assertion, to allow it to pass muster, yet I warn you to beware, and to remember, that you are in the presence of one, to whom the mind of a mortal, is as a crystal stream, wherein each thought is reflected, as clearly, as the shadows of the passing clouds, are pictured in the sunny waters of a lake!"

"If that be so, fair lady, then I need not state my wishes, but can leave it in your hands to grant, or deny their fulfilment!" said Joey, gallantly, raising his eyes for a moment to the Queen's face, and then bowing low over the tiny hand, stretched out towards him, as in friendly greeting.

"Be it so! I can read but one thought at a time, but if you are in earnest in your desire, then quaff this foaming draught, and your wish will be fulfilled!" said the Queen, with a pleasant smile, as turning to one of her pages she took from his hand, a jewelled goblet and handed it to the boy.

"I drink to the fairest and loveliest of her sex, and declare myself henceforth her most obedient slave!" said Joey, raising the cup to his lips, and draining it to the dregs.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A TRANSFORMATION SCENE.

No sooner had the liquid passed his lips, than Joey felt, as though fire was coursing through all his veins, and this alarming symptom, was followed by a curious contraction of his muscles, and a sensation of numbness, creeping over his brain, followed by a period of semi-unconsciousness, during which, he seemed to be shrivelling up, and sinking away into "nothingness."

But these sensations passed, and were succeeded by a pleasant feeling of ease and comfort, as if several tons weight, had been removed from the top of his head, so he felt that if only wings were given him, he could now fly, or float into space, at will. Looking up, however, with intent to address the Queen, he found he was no longer near to her, and on a level with the throne, but standing at the foot of what appeared to be, quite a steep flight of steps, leading up to the royal dais.

Astonished and dismayed, he glanced round about him, and was obliged to conclude, either that his vision deceived him, or else that he had himself, shrunk away, to proportions, more in keeping with his surroundings, since he was now apparently, little, if any taller, than the tiny people, amongst whom he found himself, whilst the hall, the pillars, which supported it, the throne, the marble steps, the velvet couches, in fact all the surrounding objects, seemed to have widened out and become magnified, in an amazing and imposing degree.

Looking down at himself, he discovered, that fortunately, his clothes had adapted themselves to his change of figure, and still fitted "to a nicety," so that if he had not gained in dignity, he had at least no reason to complain, that he had lost in comfort.

"Well, you have your wish! How do you like your new 'state of being?' I trust you do not feel any inconvenience from the change!" said the Queen, smiling kindly down on the boy's bewilderment, and then signing to him to advance, as she half rose to receive him.

"Indeed no! your Majesty. It is delightful. A most sensible arrangement I assure you. There is nothing more uncomfortable, than to feel yourself entirely out of proportion with your surroundings. Why I feel as light as air—almost as if I could fly!" cried Joey, in exulting tones, as lightly mounting the stairs, he saluted the Queen on both cheeks, then inspired by the strains of merry music, which seemed to issue from the folding doors immediately behind the throne, he began pirouetting round and round, to the amusement and astonishment of the courtiers, who dis-

creetly withdrew to the background, at a signal from their royal mistress.

"You shall have wings if you desire, later, but for the present, I think I can suggest, a more agreeable vent for your energy! See the guests are only awaiting our arrival to commence the ball. If you will give me your arm we will set things going!" said the Queen, turning and leading theway through the doors, which flew open, as if by magic, at her approach, revealing a brilliantly-lighted hall filled with a gaily-dressed throng of fairies, promenading noiselessly round the room, or standing about in groups, listening to the entrancing strains, discoursed by an invisible band of stringed instruments.

Immediately the Queen appeared, the music changed its character, and the fairies, ranging themselves in line, on either side of the hall, joined in singing an exquisite anthem of praise, as the Queen, leaning on Joey's arm and bowing to right and left, walked slowly down the centre of the room.

Arrived at the far end, the melody changed once more into the rhythm of a waltz. With an inviting smile, the Queen turned towards her partner, and before Joey knew what had happened, he found himself gliding round at a pace which almost took away his breath, and filled him with a delicious sense of freedom and enjoyment.

Hitherto his ideas of dancing, had been associated with all that is most distasteful and disagreeable, to boyish notions, and he had learned to look forwards, to the torments of his weekly dancing lesson, in the winter term, with a shudder of disgust and apprehension. To be made to stand in one position for five minutes, balancing, first on one foot, then on the other! to have your toes, tapped with the master's cane, and to be rated soundly for awkwardness, just when you are priding yourself, on the ease and elegance of your demeanour, to be initiated into the mysteries of "jump and change," "chassez-croisez," "glissades," &c., and last, but not least, to be given the fattest and most awkward boy in the room, for your partner in the polka, then to be made to hop round, treading on one another's toes, kicking one another's shins, and holding on to one another as for dear life, with hot sticky fingers—was a very different matter, to his present mode of progression, and not to be mentioned in the same breath. Now, with a partner, as light as a feather, with feet, that moved in time to the music, and carried him round of their own volition, without any apparent effort, Joey began to vote dancing "the most delicious excitement imaginable!" His eyes sparkled with joy, and his feet seemed almost to fly, as fired by enthusiasm, the musicians increased their speed, whilst the greater part of the guests stopped dancing, and formed an admiring circle, round the graceful couple.

How long the dance lasted, Joey could never tell, but even "fairy revels" must have an end, and all too soon, the music died away, and a prolonged round of applause greeted the royal fairy and her favoured guest, as the last note sounded, and Joey, responding to the invitation of his fair partner, led her out, beneath an archway of flowers, erected at the far end of the ball-room, into a beautiful garden, where, in a series of leafy arbours, were marble tables, spread with delicious viands, and goblets of sparkling wine.

"I think we deserve a rest and refreshment after our recent exertions. You really waltz divinely!" murmured the Queen, softly, as she sank gracefully on to a couch, and signed to Joey to take a place beside her.

"I never knew what dancing was before! I could waltz with you for ever!" replied the boy ecstatically, gazing round about, and almost overpowered, by the romantic enchantment of the scene.

Never had he seen such an effect, as that produced, by the delicate and artistic arrangement of fairy lights and lanterns, suspended as if in mid-air, of waving tropical plants, of beds of choice flowers, outlined with precious stones, of sparkling fountains, flashing into showers of spray, now silver, now gold, and anon changing to all the colours of the rainbow, and over all, a silver moon, half hidden by a filmy mist of clouds, shedding her soft radiance on the stately palace, the distant avenues of trees, the shapely marble statues, and the quaint fantastic figures, to be seen, flitting noiselessly hither and thither on the terraces, their lights glimmering in the far distance, or shining like stars against the dark background of the trees.

Much as Joey had enjoyed the excitement of the dance, he found it a pleasant relief, to sit quietly in the darkened arbour, watching the reflections on the waters, aud listening to the gentle splash of the fountains, that mingled with the rippling peals of laughter from the gay throng below, but the effect was so soothing to his senses that before many minutes had passed, his eyelids began to droop and his head to nod, in spite of all efforts to the contrary.

*(To be continued).*

## RAMBLES ROUND LONDON TOWN.

HARK! there are the ten bells of famous Bow Church, the patron bells of all true Londoners, ringing a merry peal, such as was heard by runaway Whittington on his stony perch at Highgate. This church has a tall spire, with a gilt dragon on the vane. An old saw concerning it ran thus :—

"When the Gresham grasshopper
And Bowe dragon doth meet
On England's royal throne
No king shall dare sit."

It is thought the terrible spell was dissolved when, as it happened, the Bowe Dragon and the Gresham Grasshopper chanced to be sent to the same shop to be re-gilt on the occasion of our Lady Victoria's accession, in 1837, rather a matter of fact climax after all.

To the Standard, a fountain which was in front of Bow Church in Chepe, came riding in a rich chariot of gold, Elizabeth, on her first joyous progress through the City, "and on to the Crosse, made fayre and well-trimmed, as were all the quaint houses of lath and plaister, with far-projecting windows." Upon the porch of St. Peter's stood the City waits, giving a pleasant noise as Her Majesty passed by, who on every side cast her countenance and wished well to her most loving people. As her Grace passed the Crosse, she had espied the elaborate pageant erected at the little conduit, and asked what it might signify, and being told "That there was placed Tyme." "Tyme!" quoth she; "and Tyme hath brought me hether." Strange, indeed, that the lately captive princess should be queening it here, presently receiving "the Byble in Englyshe" from a child, which book she received and kissed, and with both hands held to her breast, great with thanks to the city, while Tyme stood still "apparaylled as an olde man, with a scythe in his hande, leading Truth all clad in white," and a child stepped forth and explained—

"This old man with the sythe Old Father Tyme they call,
And her, his daughter Truth, which holdeth yonder boke,
Whom he out of his rock hath brought forth to us all,
From whence for many years she durst not once loke!"

and more to the same effect, which I must not linger to repeat, but which is duly on record.

C. L. M.

## A STORY OF EASTER EGGS.

BY MRS. MARY JOHNSON.

"O FRANK, come here! See what I've found."

The clear, bird-like tones rang through the old barn, and a pair of roguish brown eyes peered for an instant between the bars of bay Charlie's manger.

"Where are you?" called an eager boyish voice.

"This way—whoop!" And a plump little figure, in blue hood and coat, slid quickly down out of sight, and shook with laughter as Frank ran hither and thither, looking in every nook and corner—everywhere but in the right place. Annie was kneeling in the crib, which was an old-fashioned one and quite large; a mow of hay on the other side screened her completely. But she could not resist bobbing up and down to peep through the bars, and Frank, whose patience was fast dwindling, caught a glimpse of the blue hood and brown eyes.

"See there!" She pointed to a corner of the manger. "I was sure Snowflake had a nest somewhere, because she cackles every day, but I couldn't find it. Isn't it lucky! There are five eggs; we can take four, and we've six already from the other nests. And you know mamma said if we could find enough to-day, she would colour them for us this evening. It's my ownty-downty hen too."

"How do you know it's Snowflake's nest?" Frank asked.

"Because I know where all the others are," the little girl answered. "Mottle and Brownie

and Daisy are over on that mow, and Jet is in the corner by the cow's stall. Spot is up there over Charlie's head, and Crinkle is in the old sleigh. So it must be Snowflake, don't you see?"

Frank admitted the point.

"But will mamma like to have you take those, Annie?" he asked, as she was lifting them, one by one, all but the nest-egg, and laying them in her basket.

"Why not? She sent us to bring in the eggs, didn't she?"

"Yes, but don't Snowflake want to sit!"

Annie laughed merrily.

"Sit — at Easter-time? Why, Frank, of course not; or if she does want to, she mustn't. They'd hatch out too early, don't you see? The chicks wouldn't thrive."

And with her basket carefully poised on her arm, she took up the line of march pantry-wards.

True to her promise, Mamma coloured the eggs; and the children enjoyed watching the process. Mamma had pretty ways of decorating Easter eggs. She not only coloured some blue, others buff, pink, and crimson, but sometimes gummed on bright little pictures—a white dove on a blue surface, a bunch of cherries or spray of roses on a white egg; and then arranged them in a basket or dish, so as to bring the various colours into contrast.

The children were not selfish in their pleasure. Two of the prettiest eggs were laid aside for a little lame girl, and gave her a great surprise and pleasure. A crimson egg and one of orange hue were given to Jim—a small coloured boy who was wood-chopper and errand-boy for the neighbourhood in general. They caused him forthwith to stand on his head, and expand his mouth almost from ear to ear in a series of ecstatic chuckles and grins.

"Mamma," said Annie, "wouldn't Grandma like some Easter eggs? May I carry them?"

The mother looked pleased.

"Yes, dear," she answered, "I am sure she would. You may choose two or three of your coloured ones to put in the basket, but I think it will be best to send mostly white eggs without cooking. She is very fond of fresh eggs for her breakfast. So if you will be very careful, and remember that they are not boiled, you may carry them. Frank may go too, if he likes."

Grandma was much pleased. Her sitting-room was very cosy and pleasant. She always kept an open fire in the grate; and as she sat beside it in her light rocker, with a child on each side, she told them the significance of an egg.

"You know," she said, "how the hen sits patiently three weeks, keeping her eggs warm, that they may hatch. As the egg has in it a new life, which we cannot see, and after a time of quiet and warmth and brooding, the chick bursts the shell and comes out a living creature, so our souls, brooded over by God's great love, when at his call they cast off the mortal part, will rise to a brighter life in a new and better world. The butterfly, bursting its brown cocoon, where it has lain, silent and seemingly worthless, spreading its wings in the blue air, and gathering sustenance from the flowers is another Easter symbol."

The children said they understood and would remember. When they went home, Grandma advised them to leave the basket till another time, but did not say why; they thought she was tired, and did not care to take out the eggs that night. Two days later she sent home the basket, with the cover securely tied down. In it was a beautiful little kitten, with fur white as snow and soft as velvet. Annie was delighted, and called the new pet her Easter daisy.

## THE PLACE OF HONOUR.

Once on a time certain Arab merchants went to a king of Persia, and exhibited some fine horses for sale. The king liked the horses very much, and bought them. He gave the merchants two lakhs of rupees over and above the purchase, and told them to bring more horses from their own country as soon as possible. The merchants, upon this agreement, took their leave. One day afterwards, the king, exhilarated with wine, said to the Wazir, "Make out a list of all the fools in my dominions." The Wazir represented that he had already done so, and put his Majesty's name at the very head of the list. The king asked why so. He replied, "Because you gave two lakhs of rupees for horses to be brought by merchants for whom no person is security, neither does anyone know what part of Arabia they belong to; and that is a sign of the greatest folly." The king: "But if the merchants should bring the horses, what is then to be done!" The Wazir answered, "Sire, if they should be such fools as to bring the horses, I will insert the names of the merchants at the head of the list, and your Majesty's name will in that case occupy only the second place."